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AUTHOR Kapp, Chris
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ABSTRACT

The South African educational system has experienced many significant changes in the past 5 years which are intended to facilitate paradigm shifts in terms of ownership of schools, equity, wider access, more mobility, and modernization. New legislation and policy frameworks propose numerous strategic recommendations. It was against this backdrop of new legislation and policy formation, the concept of effective schools, and the need for capacity building of institutions and individuals, that the Delta Foundation's Centres of Learning Project was born. The Project was designed to develop a replicable framework for the development of centers of learning through building governance, management, and administration capacity of leadership of school communities. After discussing the concept of effective schools, this paper describes the vision, mission, and objectives of the Centres of Learning Project, discusses project sponsors and project management, and explains the research and development process used in the project. It then describes the leadership training program and discusses the consolidation and practical implementation of the leadership training. Finally, the paper describes program evaluation and lessons learned. The proposed model for the development of centers of learning includes: scientific needs assessment; a training program on personal effectiveness and leadership skills; a followup workshop; a regular feedback session; a continuous monitoring of progress; and a replication of the process to other schools. (SM)

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# Leadership Development for Educational Leaders. From Needs Assessment to Impact Evaluation - a case study

**Prof. Chris Kapp**
**University of Stellenbosch**
**Republic of South Africa**

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**Delta Foundation**

of Port Elizabeth, who sponsored the Centres of Learning Project.

**Education reporting today is like snapping a photo of a moving object: by the time the shutter has clicked, the picture has changed.**

**James Cass**

## 1. Introduction

The South African Educational system has experienced a number of significant changes in the past five years; changes which were intended to facilitate paradigm shifts in terms of ownership of schools, equity, wider access, more mobility and to bring education in line with international trends. These changes were affected, inter alia, by legislation and reports which include the following:

- The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (Act 108 of 1996).
- The Bill of Rights (Act 108 of 1996).
- The National Education Policy Act (Act 27 of 1996).
- The South African Schools Act (Act 84 of 1996).
- The Employment of Education Act (Act 138 of 1994).

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- Provincial Education Acts.
- The founding of the South African Qualifications Authority (White Paper no. 3 on Higher Education Transformation, 1997).
- The Report of the Task Team on Educational Management (1996).

Some of the many implications of these acts, reports and structures established during the last five years include the following:

- new teacher : pupil ratios which aimed at redressing imbalances;
- because of this teachers from schools where they were in excess were redeployed to schools where their services were needed;
- a new approach to school governance by the selection of school governing councils who had to be representative of the school community and devolving authority over schools to the community; and
- attempts to establish a culture of learning in the schools.

The post-apartheid educational system in South Africa is characterised by fragmentation, inequity in provision, a crisis of legitimacy and in many school, the demise of a culture of learning, as well as resistance to changing the way things have been done in the past (Department of Education, 1996: 10). Furthermore, bureaucratic inefficiency, which could be blamed on a number of factors, have caused education to be perceived as a non-system.

The new legislation, as well as the policy frameworks suggested, proposes numerous strategic recommendations. The task of transformation of education is greater than reconstructing the systems and structures which sustain any society. It requires a fundamental shift in attitudes, in the way people relate to each other and their environment, and in the way resources are deployed to achieve society's goals.

According to the Task Team on Educational Management (1996: 10) improved quality of learning and teaching can only be achieved by capacity building, developing the ability of institutions and individuals to perform effectively. Such capacity building must address

five key components: strategic direction; organisational structures and systems; human resources; infrastructural and other resources; and networking, partnerships and communication.

It is against this background of new legislation and policy formulation, the concept of the effective school and the need for capacity building of institutions and individuals that the Delta Foundation's Centres of Learning Project was born.

The magnitude of the task of transforming the educational system could not only be effected by legislation, reports and new structures. The transformation had to be effected from grassroots level by concerned stakeholders by becoming involved with projects which could improve the effectiveness of schools.

## 2. A Conceptualisation of an effective school

Differences in school effectiveness can be attributed to a number of factors. Some of these factors may be **within** the school, some they may have control over and some not. School effectiveness research has not shown that schools are responsible for or can influence their "effectiveness" (Coe and Fitz-Gibbon, 1998: 427). Some of the factors within the school or factors within its control may be considered as criteria to identify its effectiveness. Factors mentioned in the literature include administration and supervision, accountability, democracy and authority (Carrin and Shalem, 1999: 15-18). Although no clear sets of criteria for an effective school exists, there does seem to be an acceptance of the fact that effective schools have effective leaders. According to Sweeney (1982: 349) there are six leadership behaviours that have been consistently associated with effective schools.

These include the following:

- achievement is emphasised;
- instructional strategies are set;
- an orderly atmosphere is provided;
- student progress is frequently evaluated;

- instructional programmes are coordinated; and
- teachers are supported;

These findings are supported by Winter and Sweeney (1994: 65-69). Unreported attempts to develop criteria have been made by the Joint Education Trust as well as by the National Business (Equip) and the Independent Development Trust (the Thousand Schools Project).

The need for effective schools in the Port Elizabeth region of the Eastern Cape Province of South Africa and the desire to establish a model for developing an effective school, which could be replicated in other South African contexts, led the Delta Foundation to embark on an ambitious Centres of Learning Project to make a positive contribution to the development of education in South Africa. The only reported comparable South African project which aimed at bringing about organisational change in a school through leadership development, was reported by Davidoff (in Hollingworth, 1997: 100-111). In this reported case study action research was used. In the Centres of Learning Project an action research approach was preferred for the following reasons:

- organisational and leadership development is a never-ending process;
- involvement of facilitators and stakeholders on an ongoing bases was essential; and
- there are no right or wrong answers in this approach. It is a matter of plan, act, reflect and revise.

Action research is defined by Noffke (in Hollingworth, 1997: 100) as: "...research conducted in a field setting with those actually involved in that field, often alongside an 'outsider' into the study of questions influenced by practitioners rather than solely by 'experts'.

## 3. The Vision, Mission and Objectives of the Centres of Learning Project

In the early planning sessions of the project team the vision for the Centres of Learning Project was formulated as follows:

**Making a unique contribution to the building of an effective education system.**

The **mission** of the project was to develop a replicable framework for the development of centres of learning through building governance, management and administration capacity of leadership of school communities. From this mission statement a number of objectives for each sub-project was formulated, but the main objective of the whole project was to develop the abilities and skills in the leadership of disadvantaged schools in order to achieve a greater degree of self-sufficiency, self-discipline and ability so as to effectively manage, govern and administer a school. The project did not focus on improving teaching skills because the project team believed that leadership development, which includes governance, management and administration, was a first priority. Once this has been established, the improvement of teaching skills could be addressed.

The transformation of South African Education based on the Centres of Learning philosophy can be summarized as follows:

| **Pre-1994 (Apartheid)** | **Post-1994 (Post-apartheid)** |
|---|---|
| Pseudo system | Emerging unified system |
| Monopoly of undemocratic state | Multi-stakeholder government system |
| Domination/authoritarian | Negotiation/consultation/participation |
| **RESULT** | **IMMEDIATE GOALS** |
| Low capacity level of stakeholders | Enhanced capacity of stakeholders |
| Low problem solving capacity | Enhanced problem solving capacity |
| Limited resource base | Enhanced resource pool |
| Culture of dependency on state | Relative autonomy and partnership |
| Avoidance of responsibility and fatalism | Culture of self-reliance and autonomous problem solving |

## 4. Project Sponsors and Management of the Project

At the end of 1994, the Delta Motor Corporation created an independent development entity - the Delta Foundation. The Delta Motor Corporation was a management buyout from General Motors, who now owns 49% of the Delta Motor Corporation. A substantial amount of money was made available for community development purposes. In contrast to the approach of handing out money to sponsor other organisations with limited control over particular community development success, the Delta Foundation opted for a more creative approach. Two critical components of each project supported by the Delta Foundation are:

- that the initiative is formulated by a Project Team, drawing in all key stakeholders, including authorities, with all partners sharing the same vision and being equally committed to the project; and
- that the initiative is structured as a model which can be tested in a particular area (in this case Port Elizabeth) and then marketed for use initially on a regional bases and ultimately throughout South Africa.

Based on firmly entrenched partnership values, the initiative was born with emphasis placed on a number of principles, including:

- non-interference, in the domestic affairs of an institution with due consideration of the leadership structures within the institution.
- work is done within the parameters and in conjunction with the Department of Education, with the commitment to complement and extend the capacity of the Department;
- a continued awareness to enter into diverse forms of partnership to contribute towards success; and
- emphasis is placed on a systematic approach to achieve long-term solutions that will remain in place once the initiative had its impact.

These principles were developed in accordance with the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, the Reconstruction and Development Programme and Education Legislation.

Following the establishment of the Delta Foundation, a team of experienced people with the expertise to deal with the realities of the former "apartheid" education system came together to formulate a plan of action. The prime objective was to launch an initiative that would make a significant difference.

The issues covered during this early history of the Centres of Learning project included:

- addressing the crises in teaching/learning;
- limited capacity of school management in dealing with the crises; and
- the inhibiting ability of the Department of Education in dealing with the problems faced by the schools.

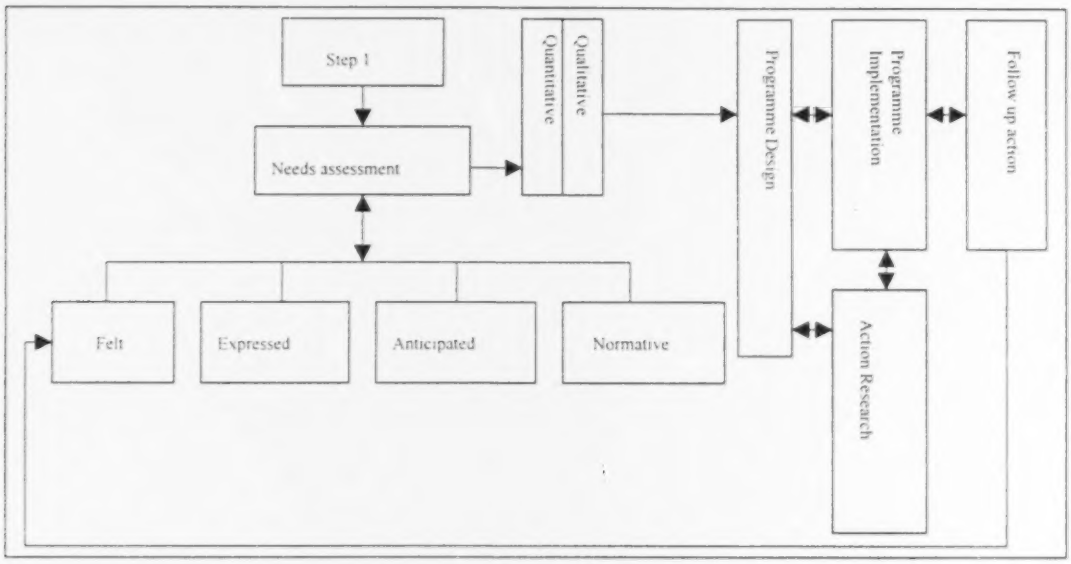
Following a pre-research period, characterised by extensive literature study, undertaken around the phenomenon of school effectiveness, a methodology workshop recommended that 10 schools be identified for a pilot study. The selection was done according to specific criteria. Experience gained in the pilot study was used in the designing of a model or framework for addressing school management and governance. In turn, this model would serve as a guide to implementing proven action strategies at schools, regionally and nationally.

## 5. The research and development process which were used in the project

The project team contracted an educational consultant group who specializes in educational leadership development training, Organisational Services, to manage one of the three sub-projects of the Centres of Learning Project. The consultants applied **two** models in their approach to the project. The **first** model was based on a systems approach to training and development, which can be summarized in the following model:

**Figure 1**

**A Systems Approach to Training and Development**

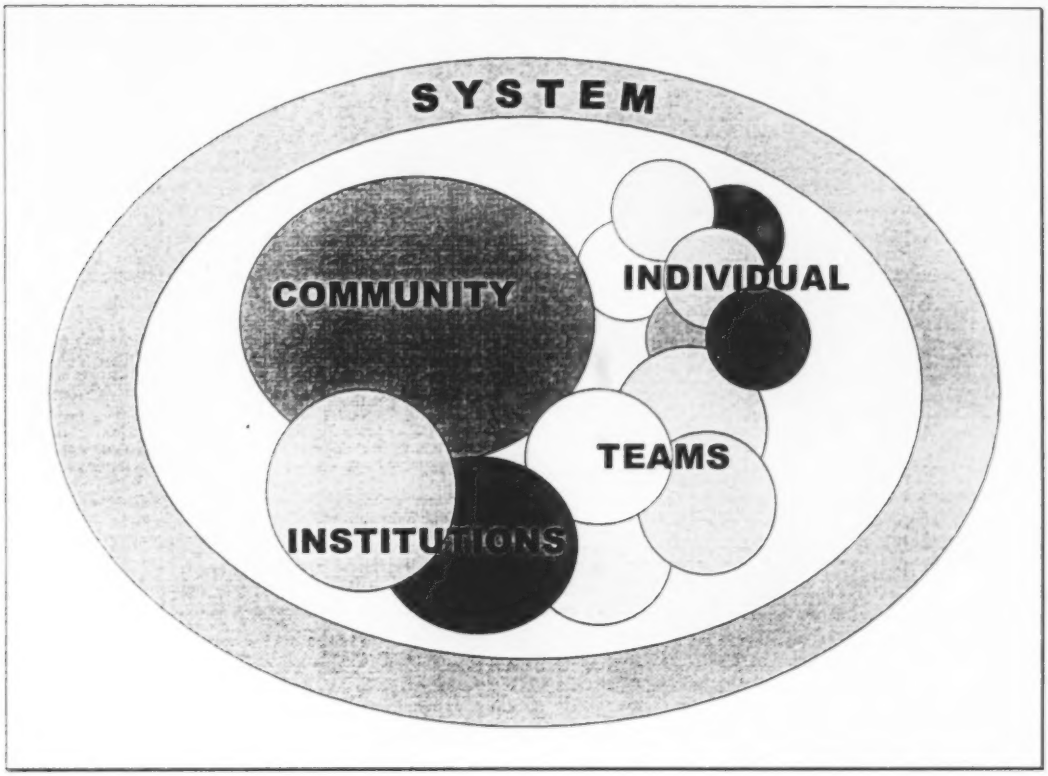



The **second** model which the consultants applied in their programme design is linked to an approach to change management. This model is based on the belief that organisational change can only be effected by helping the individual to change. Organisations do not change; the individuals (people) within the organisation are the driving forces - they have to change. Change requires learning (Senge, 1990).

To bring about systems change, one has to start with the **individual**. Individuals, who change through learning, can help a **team** to change. Teams can be effective in bringing about **institutional** change which in turn, can contribute to change in a **community** which in turn, can effect **systems change**. This can be illustrated as follows:

**Figure 2**

**An Approach to Change Management**




Each of the steps indicated in Figure 1 will be explained in the following paragraphs:

**The needs analysis**

Some 350 to 400 stakeholders in education from the nine schools [1] included in the project, participated in the needs analysis. Respondents included principals, deputy principals, heads of departments, teachers (learning facilitators), students (learners), members of the governing councils and support staff (including caretakers and secretaries).

The process used to do the needs analysis included the following steps:

* *One of the original ten schools was dropped from the project because of logistical reasons*



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**Step 1:**

During a workshop with educational experts and the project team, possible items for inclusion in a needs assessment survey were generated and refined.

**Step 2:**

A similar process (workshop) was held at each of the nine* participating schools with a representative sample of each of the stakeholders from that particular school community. This enabled the consultants to develop a comprehensive needs assessment survey questionnaire.

**Step 3:**

A draft questionnaire was piloted on a representative sample of each of the participating schools to ensure validity and reliability and to ensure that all the questions were understood by all the participants.

**Step 4:**

A needs analysis of all the participants from the nine participating schools were done by using the following method:

- Groups of twenty stakeholders came together at a time and responded to a needs assessment questionnaire which was projected by means of an overhead projector on a screen.
- The 84 statements in the questionnaire had to be responded to by using a seven point scale indicating the **importance** of that particular item in terms of leadership. The seven point scale had the following extreme values: 7 = strongly agree; 1 = strongly disagree.

Examples of the statements included in the questionnaire are given from each category of questions:

**Leading**

The ability to mobilize the efforts of all concerned behind a common goal.

**Personal effectiveness**

The ability to motivate individuals and deal with low morale.

**Educator**

The ability to promote and market a culture of learning and teaching.

**Change agent**

The ability to deal effectively with change.

**Infrastructure**

The ability to manage physical resources within the schools

**Administration**

The ability to introduce and sustain effective administrative procedures and systems.

- The respondents then had to respond to each statement in terms of their perceived **competence** in that particular area by once again using a seven point scale. The values of this seven point scale were as follows: 7 = strongly agree; 1 = strongly disagree.
- The respondents were limited to twenty at a time because they responded to each question by using a computerised polling station. For each question they punched in their responses immediately as the question was flashed on the screen.
- Each question was available in two languages (English and Afrikaans) and a Xhosa interpreter was available to explain each question, should the participants not understand the question.

**Step 5:**

The **result** of the needs assessment survey was immediately available to the particular group and any clarification needed could be given immediately.

**Step 6:**

This quantitative needs assessment was followed by a visit to each of the participating schools. Focus group discussions with a **sample** of the stakeholders from that particular school were held to verify the outcomes and to validate the findings. No new items or issues were added, which confirmed that the needs assessment was thoroughly done.

The results of the needs assessment were made available for each individual school as well as for the nine schools together. Throughout anonymity and confidentiality concerning individual responses to questions and honesty in answering the questions, were emphasised. The outcome of the needs assessment included:

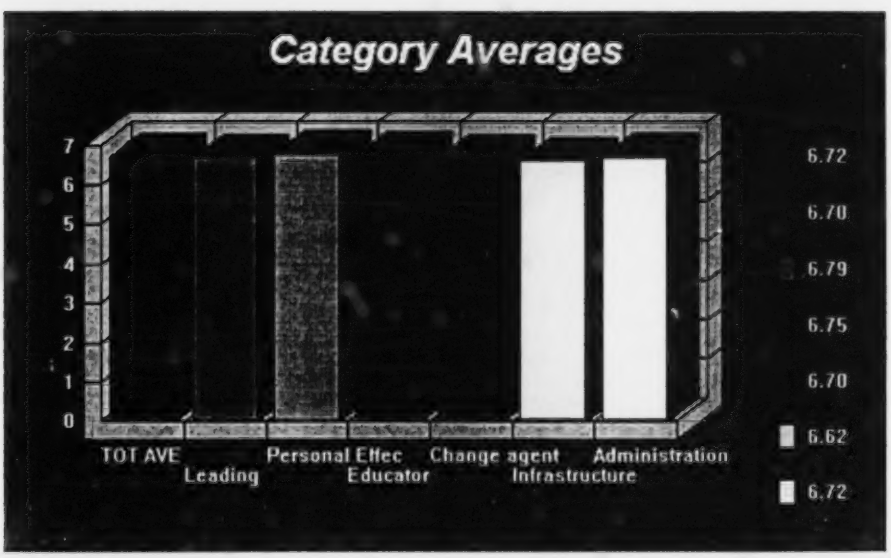
- The evidence of a clear gap between the "importance level" and "present competence level" or a clear gap between an "existing condition" and a "desired condition".
- The proposal for development and training intervention based on valid researched training needs analysis.

Both the quantitative and qualitative needs assessment sessions were experienced as securing the purpose of motivating the school communities for the project. The sessions were experienced as opportunities at which they could experience their real needs and they were looking forward to the interventions that were to follow.

The results of the needs assessment are represented in the six categories in the following graphs. The **first** graph ( Figure 3) represents the importance ratings of the six different categories of Leadership in Education. The categories referred to in Figure 3 are each made up of a series of 14 statements from the 84 - item questionnaire. Examples of the statements are given on page 10.

**Figure 3**

**The importance ratings of different categories of Leadership in Education.**

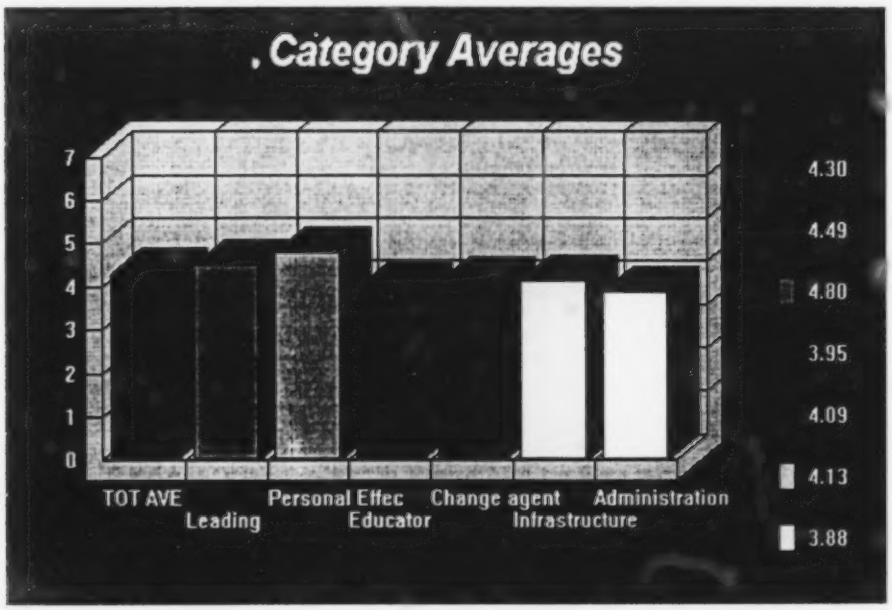


On all the statements in all categories, respondents from the school communities indicated that they perceived the areas identified by the development team to be addressed as very important.

The **second** graph (Figure 4) represents the ratings regarding the present level of functioning of the respondents.

**Figure 4**

**Present level of functioning of respondents**




On all the statements in all categories respondents from the school communities indicated that they lack in competencies and skills.

A comparison between the importance ratings and the present level of functioning provided the consultants with the so-called "training gap".

This comparison is indicated in Figure 5.

**Figure 5**

**Comparison between importance ratings and present level of functioning on all six categories**

| | Importance | Present level of functioning | Gap |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Leading** | 6.70 | 4.49 | 2.21 |
| **Personal effectiveness** | 6.79 | 4.80 | 1.99 |
| **Educator** | 6.75 | 3.95 | 2.80 |
| **Change agent** | 6.70 | 4.09 | 2.61 |
| **Infrastructure** | 6.62 | 4.13 | 2.49 |
| **Administration** | 6.72 | 3.88 | 2.84 |
| **Total average** | 6.72 | 4.30 | 2.42 |

The results of the training needs assessment served as the basis for the design of the leadership training course as well as for the training in governance and computer skills. This paper only focuses on the leadership training course.

## 6. The leadership training programme

Over a ten week period 36 participants from the nine schools participated in ten one-week workshops. The training programme was divided into three phases.

**Phase 1** focussed on self-knowledge and personal mastery. Participants were given the opportunity to experience aspects about themselves and the following modules were included:

- Personality and temperament
- Interpersonal relations
- Conflict resolution
- Leadership style
- Balanced lifestyle
- Self-management regarding prioritising

These modules attempted to address the needs indicated in the category **personal effectiveness**, although it overlapped with aspects of **leadership** and **education.**

**Phase 2** focussed on skills training and attempted to address the training gap indicated in the categories of **leadership**, **education** and **change agent**. This included the following modules:

- Change
- Leadership and management
- Setting direction
- Aligning constituencies
- Motivating and inspiring
- Team roles and team functioning
- Delegating
- Problem solving
- Dealing with diversity
- Strategic planning

**Phase 3** provided opportunities for the participants to consolidate their learning and apply what they have learned. Participants worked in teams to design a vision, mission, goals, strategies and action plans for a school. In this phase it was attempted to integrate all the learning of the previous two phases and to address the other training gaps, namely infrastructure and administration. The application exercise was a strategic planning exercise and acted as a dress rehearsal for a one-day follow-up workshop, which was envisaged for each school when the entire staff and governing council had to develop a strategic plan for their school community.

During the final part of phase 3 of the workshop, participants completed a personal implementation plan. The purpose of the implementation plan was to reinforce all learning during the workshop and to achieve some form of commitment from all the participants.

Feedback was obtained from all the participants in the ten workshops using a five-point rating scale. (5 = excellent; 4 = good; 3 = satisfactory; 2 = poor; 1 = very poor). Participants were requested to complete an anonymous evaluation by applying the rating scale to 8 items on a questionnaire. The feedback received from 291 participants is as follows:

**Figure 6**

**Feedback from workshop participants**

| | Item | Poor Very poor (1 & 2) | Satisfactory (3) | Excellent Good (4 & 5) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | **General organisation of the workshop** | | 5% | 95% |
| 2. | **Achievement of goals** | | 9% | 91% |
| 3. | **Level of the presentation** | 1.3% | 6.7% | 92% |
| 4. | **Capabilities of the workshop facilitators** | | 6% | 94% |
| 5. | **How much learning took place during the workshop?** | 0.3% | 4.7% | 95% |
| 6. | **Relevance of the material to personal circumstances** | 0.3% | 4.7% | 95% |
| 7. | **Extent to which I am able to implement what I have learned** | 2% | 22% | 76% |
| 8. | **Overall evaluation of the workshop** | 1% | 3% | 96% |

From the feedback received from the participants it was clear that for more than 90% of the participants the workshop was an excellent or good learning experience. The only item receiving less than 90% on the highest categories of the rating scale, was item 7 (extent to which I am able to implement what I have learned). This rating can be explained by the wide variety of participants, as it would be more difficult for some categories of participants to implement everything they have learned. The inability of participants to implement what they have learned could also be attributed to the relative chaos which exists in the system.

## 7. The consolidation and practical implementation of the leadership training

After completion of the ten leadership training workshops, the practical implementation followed within two months. A one-day intervention followed at each of the nine participating schools as a consolidation exercise. A barrier in the training design was that during the leadership training courses it was difficult, due to the logistical implications, for schools to have all the stakeholders from one school present at one workshop. Therefore, the one-day leadership consolidation exercise for each of the participating schools had the following aims:

- to enable a school leadership community to put to practice their leadership skills which they have acquired in a protective training environment in the real life situation, under the guiding presence of the facilitators;
- to consolidate the leadership training experiences of those members of a particular school;
- to give all the leaders of a particular school the opportunity to plan and work together as a team;
- to enable the leadership of a school to put forward a team who will take up the task of a strategic planning committee; and
- to put in place a support system that will guide and support the leader in transforming the school in the next 3 to 5 years.

The methodology followed during the one day workshop included the following:

- The school leadership community had to complete an environmental scanning exercise prior to the one-day workshop, which had to be in the form of a detailed SWOT-analysis for their specific school.
- During the one-day consolidation workshop the leadership community and all the teaching staff had to develop a vision, mission, strategies and action plans. A strategic planning committee was identified by the participants to facilitate the transformation process in the school.

- A monitoring instrument and a strategic support service/hotline had to be put in place to facilitate the process and to measure achievement of the strategic objectives.

To further help to consolidate the leadership training and the implementation of strategies and action plans a three-day leadership training course for student leaders was held to further equip them for the demands of a fast changing school environment. Some of the intended outcomes of this workshop included:

- developing "stronger" student leadership to support school staff and parents in running the school more effectively;
- developing a network of leaders who could have a positive effect on community life and facilitate positive change; and
- to develop trained liaison teachers who understand the concerns of and affairs of students and who could act as intermediaries between students and authorities.

## 8. Evaluation of the Centres of Learning Project:

The Delta Foundation contracted the Joint Education Trust (JET) to do an evaluation of the work and the functioning of the pilot project aimed at developing a model for effective and quality schooling in the region.

The **first phase** of their evaluation was to establish baseline data and key indicators for each school.
The **second phase** concerned the implementation of the programme and the impact of the intervention in terms of institutional change and cultural, social and educational outcomes in schools. This phase was to be conducted in six-monthly intervals.

The evaluation had to clearly identify what had been achieved and which areas of the project required fine-tuning to enhance successes achieved. Primarily the aim was to refine the model and elevate the value of the model when implemented at schools.

As far as the **first phase** of the evaluation was concerned, baseline date was collected by means of a questionnaire and interviews with the principals of the participating schools.

The baseline information included the following:

- a data base on the profile of the school (service, facilities, support);
- a data base on the governing and management bodies;
- a data base of the staff, student population and teacher-pupil ratios; and
- a data base on documents and tools such as vision, mission and code of conduct.

Regarding the **second phase**, principals listed the following as indicators of the success of the project:

- more motivated teachers
- more teachers with initiative
- improved results
- more attractive school buildings
- a more goal directed atmosphere
- 90-100% teacher attendance in class
- better performance of pupils from teachers with commitment
- community involvement in the education of their children
- greater commitment from teachers.

The evaluation team came to the following conclusions:

The leadership training courses had a positive effect on most of the schools as all the stakeholders shared a common understanding of particular concepts and showed a willingness to participate in the life of the school. It is unfortunate that this initial enthusiasm was not harnessed and exploited by enough of the participants and members of school management.

The limited impact of the training courses could be attributed to the fact that the schools did not participate in the courses as groups. Knowledge which should have had an organisational impact therefore resided with individuals and did not impact on the school as an organisation.

Although it is difficult to effect attitudinal and behavioural change through a single training programme "Seeds" were planted in the minds of individuals. However, this needs to be nurtured if it is to be sustained and have a significant impact on organisational cultures. On-site follow-up, coaching, mentoring and monitoring was essential to ensure continued implementation and application.

The impact of the course was disproportionate to the time spent on the course and the cost of the exercise. This conclusion is based on a subjective view of the evaluation team and no evidence could be found from any participants to substantiate this point of view.

The 1998 project evaluation by the Joint Educational Trust indicated that all participating schools had felt enthusiastic about the course. All schools reported that the attitudes of stakeholders had changed and that teacher morale had improved. In the follow-up interviews with principals the following were reported:

- improved management of the school;
- less autocratic management than before;
- more participative staff meetings;
- improved communication and consultation with staff and students;
- increase in delegation of responsibility;
- more active involvement of staff and parents in the school;
- management tools such as vision, mission and code of conduct introduced;
- committees introduced;
- changes in management style;
- increased transparency in the management of the school;
- raised awareness of management issues;
- improved relations between stakeholders and schools;
- improved financial management;
- improved teacher morale; and
- changes introduced to the time spent on the course and the cost of the exercise.

## 9. Lessons learned for future implementation

As can be seen from the reports of the evaluation team, the following lessons have been learned from the exercise:

1. It would lead to much better transfer of learning if all the staff of one school could be included in one training group for all the phases of training.
2. This approach would enable the trainers to develop a differentiated programme for each particular school according to their specific context and needs in stead of doing a generic programme. This approach would lead to **four types** of programmes according to the developmental phase of the particular school (dysfunctional, rehabitative, developing and interdependent). One of the strategies to be applied in future application of the model, would be to approach individual schools in a differentiated manner and to meet their needs at their developmental level regarding their organizational ethos (leadership), management, administration and governance. Four developmental stages were identified namely dysfunctional, rehabilitative, developing and interdependent.
3. The follow-up and coaching for each school has to be provided on a continuous basis either through a mentorship programme, twinning or an ongoing hotline service. Some form of formal contracting and feedback needs to be established to discipline participating schools to "deliver the goods".

It must be confirmed again that all four these recommendations were part of the original model put forward by the consultants, but could not be accepted by the sponsors and/or the project team because of the following reasons:

- For logistic reasons in the schools it was not possible to do "whole school training" and thus only a limited number of participants per school could be included in each training session.
- For the very same reason it was not possible to do differentiated training which would have addressed the specific needs of a particular school. Although the project team and the consultants had to opt for a generic approach, this was not a reason for serious

concern as there was no significant difference between the needs of the different schools.

- According to the sponsors and the project team, it would have been too costly to include a mentorship or twinning programme. This may have been an unfortunate decision as the introduction of a mentorship programme need not be costly and it could have been established in conjunction with present successful/effective schools and an experienced retired/retrenched principal. This could have ensured continuity of the application of the strategic planning and better internalisation of the learning, which took place in the workshops.
- Schools, which were accepted to participate in the Centres of Learning Project each, had to commit themselves to meet certain criteria. Some of these criteria should include commitments to meeting deadlines and to report on progress at regular intervals.

A revisit to the proposed model for the development of centres of learning could be summarized as follows:

- A proper scientific **needs assessment**.
- A **training programme** on personal effectiveness and leadership skills for all the stakeholders of a particular school which includes the development of a strategic plan for the school for the next 3 years.
- A **follow-up workshop** at least three months after the initial training to consolidate the training and to ensure that structures are in place and commitments are kept.
- A **regular feedback session** by all participating schools to the project team on progress with the implementation of their strategic plans and to discuss problems experienced.
- A **continuous monitoring** of progress as well as support from a coach/mentor who could be from a successful/effective school in the region and/or a retired or retrenched principal.
- A **replication** of the process to other schools which could lead to a cascading of the project to include more schools.

For the concept to be sustainable and replicable, there is a need to expose officials of the Department of Education to the initiative and the training. It has to be accepted that to bring about fundamental change, takes time. Ongoing support and encouragement also needs to be available. Outcomes assessment criteria have to be specified for each training initiative. In future the project may have to target teaching and learning as a next step in the transformation process.

This model could be represented graphically in the following way:

**Figure 7**

**Model for Centres of Learning Project**

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The vision of the project team may not have been achieved after the completion of the pilot project. However, from the lessons learned through action research it is possible to achieve the mission of the project team, namely to develop a replicable framework for the development of centres of learning. The lessons learned have been valuable and should be incorporated into the model. It is only by sheer hard work and continued commitment to the task that significant change will be achieved in education.

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